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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
MFA FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

BY

KELLY DIANE JOHNER

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

IN

SCULPTURE

DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SUMMER 2007

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

Final Visual Presentation

Submitted by Kelly Diane Johner in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts.



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NAME OF AUTHOR: KELLY DIANE JOHNER

TITLE OF THESIS: FINAL VISUAL PRESENTATION

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS GRANTED: MASTER OF FINE ARTS

YEAR THIS DEGREE WAS GRANTED: 2007

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DEPARTMENT OF ART AND DESIGN

GRADUATE STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

I hereby release the following works into the sculpture collection, University of Alberta.

TITLE	DATE	MEDIUM	SIZE
Shoulder In	2007	Fir, spruce	76"x50"x36"

Value: \$3,000

"what is required of me is that I walk and look and think, changing nothing, moving nothing and some day I would know whatever it is I needed to know."

-Sharon Butala. *Wild Stone Heart*. 2000

Every second day I walk the fields, pastures and woods where I live just like I did as a child growing up on my Grandfather's dairy farm. I am always fascinated by the abundance of inspiration the natural environment has to offer. The variety of shapes, textures, colors and forms, the sounds and scents, continuously challenge my senses. This environment gives me a collective repertoire of imagery, ideas, and memories that I can reference in my work.

I choose to work with wood because of its organic nature and the variety of textures, forms, and colors it offers. It has a tensile strength yet it possesses a certain fragility which creates an interesting duality. My response to the material is very intuitive. It is through the process of making the sculpture that the nature of the work begins to unfold. When I work I begin with a particular piece of wood because I am drawn to something interesting about its character, like the worn weathered quality, wizened texture, and age spots that some of the wood possesses.

Initially, I built large vertical sculptures. I cut and maneuvered the heavy chunks by splining the pieces together which is an additive process that is slow and labor intensive. While building the larger sculpture I started making small sculpture which I carved as a whole. This method allowed me to work quickly and respond more spontaneously to the materials. I chose some of my small sculptures and cast them in different materials. I experimented with plaster, cement, beeswax and bronze. In the last series, I began to incorporate organic chunks in with the rectilinear forms I have been using. Although the majority of the wood I use is rectilinear in its form, its origin is the natural environment.

Being a sculptor brings me back to the farm in many ways. When I work the scent of the wood brings back memories of place and time. The way I work—stacking, piling, fitting and piecing things together—is a similar approach that connects me to the rural environment that I live in. Sometimes I have to improvise and come up with a creative solution to challenging questions just as I do on the farm. I often use what I have and I respond to it as I go. Even the physicality of working the materials is relative to the farm. This connection is here in the forms that I build, the materials that I use, the way that I use them, as well as the tools I use to create the sculpture. The end result is not a realistic representation of what I remember. My memories have been abstracted by time, but the essence of what I know and see is here.

Kelly Johner
2007

This has been a memorable journey for me. A journey of which could not have been possible without the help, support and understanding of more than a few people.

I would like to thank my Professor and advisor in Sculpture, Peter Hide. For without his support and encouragement, his advice and suggestions, his intuitive foresight to say the right things when I needed him to say them, I would not be here.

To John McGie and Bianca Khan--- for sharing their wealth of knowledge on any number of topics and finding the answers to ones they were not sure of, for fixing saw blades and always helping at the drop of a hat.

To Cesar, who has taken a parallel journey along with me-- for your friendship, support, insight and always having an ear to listen with, thank you.

To the Oral exam committee — Dr. Betsy Boone, Professor Peter Hide, Professor Emeriti Lyndal Osborne and Professor Bill Street. It was a pleasure.

To all the teachers, staff and friends I have made along the way, you have enriched my journey and made it much more interesting.

To Blair and the wonderful gallery staff, for all your help and support in making this show happen.

To Chris, Cesar and Vance for your brains and brawn on installation day.....

And last but not least, to my family for their unconditional love, support, help and understanding.....

To my Mom-- for taking up the slack for me on the farm since I started grad school, for pitching in when I need a worker bee to help with a project.

To Chandra and Yuksel -- such special faces, for being my greatest fans, a source of insight and understanding, setting up shows, and many revisions.

To Tyler -- for your special face, cheerful nature, giving your time and 'muscles' to move yet another sculpture and never complaining about the art work taking over the house when it does.

To Vance, for keeping me sane when I most need it, for hauling sculpture (and "various collected interesting treasures that I may use down the road in some sculpture") that require a truck and a trailer every time I ask, for encouraging me to be who I am and follow my dreams.....

THANK YOU.

24 july – 18 august 2007

MFA • SCULPTURE

kelly johner

against the grain



OPENING *reception:*

thursday, 26 july 7:00 – 10:00 PM

GALLERY *hours:*

tuesday to friday 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM

fab gallery

[FINE ARTS BUILDING GALLERY]

saturday 2:00 – 5:00 PM
closed sunday, monday and statutory holidays

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this exhibition is the final visual presentation for
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Fir,
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Rhy
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Lon
Fir,
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against the grain

Shoulder In · 2007

Fir, spruce
76hx50wx36d

Corner Post 2007

Spruce, fir
61hx25wx26d

Around & Through SE ¼, Section 8, 2007

Fir,
66h

24 JULY — 18 AUGUST 2007

Res
Fir,
60h

This exhibition is the final visual presentation of the
of master of fine arts (mfa) in sculpture

OPENING *reception*
thursday, 26 july 7:00 - 10:00 PM

Res
Fir,
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GALLERY *hours*:
tuesday to friday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
saturday 2:00 - 5:00 PM
closed sunday, monday and statutory holidays

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24 JULY — 18 AUGUST 2007

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OPENING *reception:*

thursday, 26 july 7:00 - 10:00 PM

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against the grain

kelly johner

2007

List of Works (20 pieces)

Rhyme or Reason, (Big bulky floor piece) 2007

Fir, elm, spruce
51"hx42"wx30"d

Reason, (floor piece) 2007

Fir, elm, oak, beeswax
42hx24wx14d

Rhyme, (floor piece) 2007

Fir, elm,

Longhorn 2007

Fir, spruce
45hx61lx16d

Shoulder In 2007

Fir, spruce
76hx50wx36d

Corner Post 2007

Spruce, fir
61hx25wx26d

Around & Through SE ¼, Section 8, 2007

Fir, spruce
66hx18wx16d

Resting backwards 2007

Fir, spruce
60hx24wx26d

Resting Heads 2007

Fir, spruce
45hx20wx23d

Trunkated 2006

Spruce
23hx21wx19d

Tall yellow piece 2006

Spruce
103hx38wx33d

Jackson I 2006
Spruce
17hx9wx14d

After Picasso 2006
Bronze
16hx5wx4d

Brutus II 2006
Bronze
11hx7wx8d

Chinganna 2007
spruce, ink, stain
14.5hx6.5wx5d

Chinganna 2007
Cement
14.5hx6.5wx5d

Stacked, (last piece) 2007
Elm, fir, spruce
3x3x3

Jackson II 2006
plaster/hydrocal
17hx9wx14d

Brutus I 2006
spruce
11hx7wx8d

Chinganna 2007
unrefined beeswax
14.5hx6.5wx5d

Prairie Artsters

Writing, reviewing, and documenting art on the prairies

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FRIDAY, JULY 27, 2007

Kelly Johner, Against the Grain, FAB Gallery, July 24 - August 18, 2007

Image: "Chinganna I, II, and III"
courtesy of the artist

When keeping the natural curves of the trunks, Kelly Johner disturbs the form of her sculptures. Disturb in the sense of line and aesthetic, but also in the sense that it problematizes the cold hardness of her sculpture's steel cousins. The wood grains and trunk shapes carry too much life, appearing trapped and stacked against each and so naturally melded into this new shape. As trees themselves

are almost perfect structures, and where steel has none, to experience a wooden sculpture of abstract and awkward proportions was unsettling. However, a piece like "Shoulder In", which keeps the lines straight and clean and doesn't reveal the material's formal qualities, certainly carried a great presence inside the gallery. As an exercise in exploring form, as displayed with the entry way's "Chinganna I, II, III" sculptures (identical miniature figures varying from beeswax, wood, and cement) Johner's pieces reconsiders the material matter as the central identity to a piece of art.



Posted by Amy Fung at 7/27/2007 04:44:00 PM

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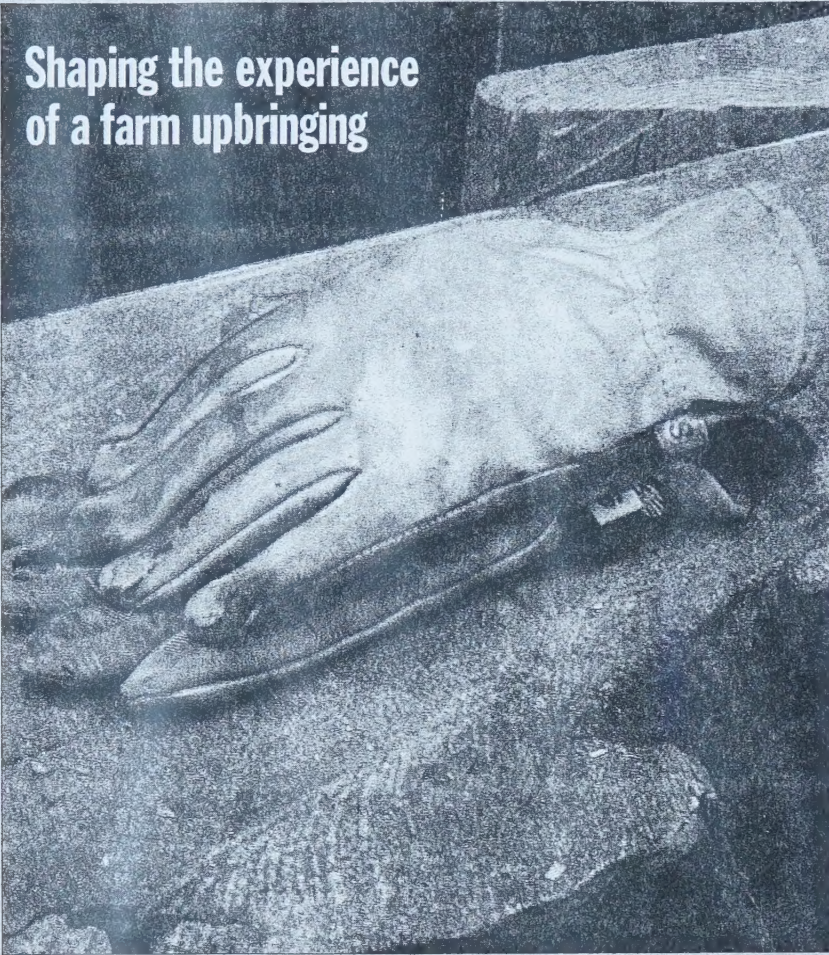
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Shaping the experience of a farm upbringing



Kelly Johner's sculptures evoke memories of her life growing up on the farm.

WO **AGAINST THE GRAIN,**
Kelly Johner,
FAB, U of A Campus,
until Aug. 18,
info: 492-2081

On a farm, you often have to improvise or build the things that you need: fences, sheds, furniture, feed bins for the livestock. Growing up on a farm, Kelly Johner's series of sculptures, *Against the Grain*, are as well-crafted and utilitarian as a well-made fence. But they definitely are beautiful: the smaller sculptures could be cubist portraits made in three dimensions, with the artist reproducing some pieces in more than one material (wood, metal, wax) to show that the medium affects

the outcome of the work. Wood comes across as warm and sturdy, metal gives the piece more of a modernist edge, wax softens the feeling of the shape, and so on.

The larger sculptures, all made of wood, integrate the natural shapes of tree trunks, dovetailed into precisely cut and stacked lumber. They are substantial, as if they are meant to be used for something and must be able to stand the wear.

— Mari Sasano

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